

Dear Subscriber:

This Iowa DNR Water Quality Listserv is a subscription service that you have requested. Its purpose is to deliver timely water quality technical information directly to your email. This listserver is targeted to those actively engaged in regulatory activities regarding NPDES permitting, wastewater facility construction, water quality standards, flood plain permitting and wastewater operator certification. This listserver will offer regulatory news, program updates and technical guidance.

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New Wastewater Construction Processes Unveiled

No one wants project delays, and with that in mind, the DNR continues to try to streamline the wastewater construction permitting and loan processes. Several new materials are now available to explain the new processes, including:

- 1) A new wastewater construction permitting manual. This manual has been reorganized and reformatted to make it more user-friendly. All wastewater projects need to follow this process. The manual also provides information on the additional requirements tied to using federal funds, in particular the State Revolving Fund.
- 2) A new State Revolving Fund loan application process, which now provides several options for funding. SRF loans will now be handled through the Iowa Finance Authority in cooperation with the DNR.
- 3) Planning & Design loans are available at the beginning of the project, to cover those upfront costs for engineering, archeological surveys, and others. P&D loans may be repaid or rolled into construction financing.
- 4) A pre-application for a construction loan is now required to be submitted with the facility plan. This will allow DNR to place the project on the priority list in the state Intended Use Plan. At that point, we will reserve funding for the project.
- 5) After the facility plan is approved, with the scope of the project better-defined, the owner may begin the construction loan process with the Iowa Finance Authority.

All of the new materials are on-line at [www.iowasrf.com](http://www.iowasrf.com). Click on the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. For more information, contact Patti Cale-Finnegan, SRF Coordinator, 515-242-6043 or [patti.cale-finnegan@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:patti.cale-finnegan@dnr.state.ia.us).

Attention All Water Treatment Grade "A" Operators

If you are a Grade A operator whose certificate has an issue date prior to April 1, 2005, you must earn 10 hours of continuing education (10 hours = 1 CEU) by March 31, 2007, in order to renew your certificate in 2007. If you receive training fliers please look for indication that the training topic is appropriate for Grade A operators. The IDNR is in the process of setting up free

continuing education classes for Grade A operators. Fliers for these classes will be sent in the coming months. If you have any questions on the appropriateness of a class, call Laurie or Jane at 515/725-0284. If your Grade A Certificate has an issue date after April 1, 2005, you do not need to earn any CEUs until the 2009 renewal period.

#### 2005 Operator Certification Five Year Strategic Plan

In 1998, the IDNR awarded a joint contract to the Iowa Section American Water Works Association and the Iowa Water Pollution Control Association to develop, with stakeholder input, a five-year plan for the Water and Wastewater Operator Certification Program. The plan was approved and published in February 1999.

This year the IDNR again awarded a contract to the two associations to coordinate an assembly of stakeholders to review the progress made under the 1999 plan and upgrade it to reflect the current status and future direction and needs of operator certification in Iowa. The two associations gathered members from stakeholder organizations and began meeting in March. The Draft Five Year Strategic Plan was presented to the IDNR in July.

The IDNR has posted the Draft Five Year Strategic Plan for public comment. A copy has been posted on our website at <http://www.iowadnr.com/water/files/2005plan.pdf>. If you do not have access to our website and would like a paper copy mailed or faxed to you, please call 515/725-0282. IDNR will be holding a series of public meetings across the state in order to collect operator input. A schedule of the public meetings is posted on our website at <http://www.iowadnr.com/news/05nov/opcert.html>.

If you wish to comment on any aspect of the Draft Five Year Strategic Plan but are unable to attend one of the public meetings, please submit your comments by December 16, 2005, to Laurie Sharp at [laurie.sharp@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:laurie.sharp@dnr.state.ia.us) or mail to:

Laurie Sharp, IDNR  
Water Supply Operations  
401 SW 7<sup>th</sup> St, Suite M  
Des Moines IA 50309

#### Operator Certifications Electronic Exams

Operators can now take Grade 1 and 2 exams for Water Treatment, Water Distribution and Wastewater electronically at the IDNR Central Office at 401 SW 7<sup>th</sup> St. in Des Moines. Operators may call Jane Enfield at 515/725-0463 to schedule an exam for any agreed upon time Monday through Friday during IDNR business hours. The IDNR has received positive feedback from operators who have already utilized this process. It is convenient and easy to use. The exam is automatically scored so operators know their score before they leave the examination site.

All types and grades of exams are still being offered monthly on paper. A copy of the 2006 Exam Schedule can be found at <http://www.iowadnr.com/water/files/examsched.pdf>.

#### Operator Certification Rule and Policy Updates

Continuing Education (CEU) credit for Safety Training limited to 20% of the CEU requirement:

What does this mean to an operator? If renewal of your certificate requires 1 CEU, 10 hours, then only 2 of the 10 hours required can consist of safety training. If your certificate requires 2 CEUs, 20 hours, then only 4 of the 20 hours required can consist of safety training. For a list of topics approved for continuing education in the state of Iowa go to <http://www.iowadnr.com/water/files/04ceu.pdf> . The link to our Operator Certification Training Calendar can be found at <http://www.waterww-calendar.org/>.

Sun-setting of "Doubling of CEUS" for exam eligibility:

In the Iowa Operator Certification Rules, which can be found at <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Rules/Current/iac/567iac/56781/56781.pdf>, 45 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) = 1 year of Post High School Training or experience. In the past, IDNR honored the requirement of 23 CEUs = 1 year of PHST or experience because of the following clause in the rules: IAC 567-81.7 (455B) "...Directly related post-high school education will be granted education credit 2.0 times the number of semester, quarter or CEU credits until January 1, 2006."

Now that January 1, 2006, is rapidly approaching, the IDNR wants to remind all operators that the "doubling of CEU credits" will no longer exist. This means that an operator needs the full 45 CEUs instead of the 23 that was required before December 31, 2005. Please contact Laurie Sharp at 515/725-0284 with any questions.

#### Water Quality Standards Frequently Asked Questions

Water quality standards are the cornerstone for many of the DNR's water quality programs. The standards define uses for rivers, streams and lakes in determining what the level of water quality should be for each water body. Some standards are oriented toward providing a safe supply of drinking water, some are designed to protect aquatic life and wildlife, and some are to ensure safe recreational uses for the public, such as swimming. The proposed rule changes will only affect recreational and aquatic life uses.

Iowa's water quality standards are in the beginning stages of major revisions. As the standards change, some wastewater treatment facilities and industries may need to make significant changes to meet the new standards. Here is one of the frequently asked questions and its answer. For more information about Water Quality Standards, visit <http://www.iowadnr.com/water/standards/index.html>

How will these changes affect the discharge limits for wastewater treatment facilities?

When we adjust the level of protection, facilities that discharge into those streams may need to improve their treatment facility to meet more stringent limits in their discharge permit. Some facilities will have to make minor adjustments in how they operate the facility while others may have to construct or install additional treatment equipment. There will be some that may have to build a completely new wastewater treatment facility.

#### Relevant Links

For more information on Iowa DNR water quality programs, please visit the following address: <http://www.iowadnr.com/water/index.html>.